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SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

1. It will be desirable for the President to run over the main theme in his communication to Khrushchev as follows:
 - a. In view of the great responsibility of Heads of Government for finding a peaceful solution in the Berlin question where the vital interests of great nations are involved at a major point of friction, we find especially troubling the consistent Soviet failure to take any real account of what we have made clear are the vital interests of the US and its Allies.
 - b. The very way in which the Soviet Union states the problem implies acceptance of its position. The various formulae which the Soviet Union has put forward all have the same objective -- the total withdrawal or severe reduction in the position of the Western Powers in Berlin. Merely mixing the same ingredients together in different portions does not change the basic fact that the result is impossible from our viewpoint.
 - c. Our acceptance of any of these would be interpreted throughout the world as a complete capitulation and would lead to complete abandonment of the city by the West Berliners. For this reason, at the Vienna meeting more than a year ago, we placed great stress on the commitment of the US to Berlin in terms of our national prestige and vital interests.
 - d. Without recognition of our vital interests in this matter it is hard to see how other related matters can be considered.
 - e. We likewise cannot accept the Soviet imputation that the US side has not put forward any proposals. Our views as to how appropriately to draw a line under World War II are well-known, but since these are unacceptable to the Soviet Government we have not pressed them to the point of conflict and crisis.
 - f. We could not, of course, be expected to put forward proposals designed to eliminate ourselves from West Berlin. We have instead tried to be practical in our approach and have attempted to provide a means of dealing with the fact of disagreement in such a way as to serve the broader common interest of both sides in the avoidance of head-on collision.
 - g. We do not think that the merits of our suggested approach, in the informal working paper which Secretary Rusk gave Foreign Minister Gromyko in Geneva on March 22, 1962, have never really been adequately considered by the Soviet Government. We hope that this and the explanations given of it by Secretary Rusk subsequently will be reviewed to see whether such an approach does not suggest an acceptable way out of the present impasse.

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h. A quieting of the Berlin question on the basis of respect for the mutual interests of both sides could not help but markedly improve the entire atmosphere of relations between the Soviet Union and the US. It will be closely related to progress on disarmament. The almost continuous crisis over Berlin since November, 1958 has been a major factor in the acceleration of arms preparations as well as in focusing attention on nuclear weapons. The US military preparations which began last summer took place only after the renewal of Soviet threats against our position in Berlin. Further pressures in Berlin can only exacerbate the situation and enhance the danger of an arms race which we assume neither side desires.

i. Living in the nuclear age, we cannot possibly accept the inevitability of a major confrontation. The Governments can take decisions to avoid this, and we hope that the Soviet Government will give serious thought to the points made in our communication. We have not tried to deal with every point raised in the Soviet communication but have limited ourselves to the essentials. Silence should not be interpreted as complete agreement on other points.

j. In connection with the forthcoming meeting between our Foreign Ministers in Geneva, we hope that Gromyko will come with a position embodying genuine elements of reciprocity. If so, we feel certain that progress can be made in removing a major source of contention. This will have a heartening effect in improving the atmosphere and in making progress possible in other related areas.

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